

The Gospel Messenger.

"It was needful to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." *Jude 3.*

"I will take no man's liberty of judging from him; neither shall any man take mine from me."

Chillingworth.

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FOR THE GOSPEL MESSANGER.

ESSAY ON THE BIBLE SOCIETY QUESTION.

No. IV.

HAVING briefly considered the question as to the completeness of the Holy Scriptures, we proceed to the second proposed inquiry:—Does the Bible contain within itself the means of its own interpretation? That some texts may be explained by a reference to others, and therefore, that the noting of parallels, as is done in the margin of some editions, is a valuable help to the understanding of the Bible will be denied by no one.

But there are many texts which cannot be explained in this way, for the understanding of which reference must be made to history, laws, and customs. For example, let us take the text already quoted: "On the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread." Why is the particular day specified? To one ignorant of the observance of the Lord's day, it would appear merely an incidental remark. But he who knows of this observance promptly recognizes in this assembling of disciples the customary attention to "the first day of the week," and arrives at the full understanding of the whole text. In like manner a reader who had no interpreter but the Bible itself, would be apt to consider in the text "go ye and baptise," the expression "all nations" as synonymous with "all men," but adverting to the custom of infant baptism, he perceives that the term nations is used with peculiar propriety, including, as it does, both infants and adults. It has been justly remarked that many doctrines are *indirectly* taught in the Scriptures, and can be made clear to our apprehension only by a reference to other sources of information. "There are doctrines, (says Hawkins) in the orthodox creed of Christianity," (for example, the Trinity) "which furnish a key to passages in the New Testament, which to those who want or refuse this aid, are sources of perplexity and error. In general too, the more fundamental the doctrine, (unless it were a point particularly controverted at the time,) the more likely would it be rather to be *implied*, than directly taught, in the writings of the Apostles addressed to societies of Christians, instructed, without doubt, by previous oral communication in the mere elementary articles of belief."

A little reflection will satisfy every candid person that the negative of the question before us, that is in reference to a *complete* understanding of the Bible, must be admitted. Such was the opinion of the most profound Theologians. Athanasius remarks: "The knowledge of true and divine religion and piety does not much need the ministry of man," as if the Bible is the great

means of this knowledge, but other means are in some degree, small comparatively of course, necessary. Usher says: "Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture, according to the *analogy of faith*." Chillingworth is more decisive: "Universal tradition is the rule to judge all controversies by." Bishop Hopkins thus expresses his opinion: "Scripture is the best interpreter of its own meaning usually," plainly conceding that there is occasion sometimes for extrinsic interpretation. "We make great use, (observes Bishop Burnet writing on the vi. article) of tradition,* especially that which is most ancient and nearest the source, to help us to a *clear understanding* of the Scriptures; yet, as to matters of faith, we reject all oral tradition as an incompetent mean of conveying down doctrines to us, and we refuse to receive any doctrine that is not either expressly contained in Scripture, or clearly proved from it."

Again: "When these writers come to explain or argue, they use many figures that were well known *in that age*: but because the signification of a figure is to be taken from common use, and not to be carried to the utmost extent that the words themselves will bear, we must therefore inquire, as much as we can, into the manner and phraseology of the time in which such persons lived, which, with relation to the New Testament, will lead us far; and by this we ought to govern the extent and importance of these figures"—"Since the Jews had, at the time of the writing of the New Testament, a peculiar way of expounding many prophecies and passages in the Old Testament; it was a very proper way to convince them, to allege many places *according to their key and methods of exposition*."

That the views of our Church correspond with those which have been adduced is evident from a Canon of 1571. "Let Preachers, above all things, be careful that they never teach aught in a Sermon, &c. except that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and which the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops have collected from that very doctrine."

In the preface to the Ordinal we read: "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and *ancient authors* that," &c. If the Bible was its own interpreter, here was a favourable opportunity for declaring it, but instead the Church refers her members to history—to the opinions of Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops, and to authors, as useful interpreters. If we should admit that the vi. article seemed to favour the opinion now combated, (which it does not, having reference altogether to a distinct question, viz. Whether Scripture be the only rule of faith which it affirms, and not to the question, whether it be its own interpreter,) the above quotations must remove all doubt on the point, since it is an incontrovertible position that the Church cannot have contradicted herself. What is affirmed not clearly in one of her public documents, must be explained in consistency with that which is elsewhere declared in a manner free from all possible doubt.

It cannot be denied that several Theologians, both ancient and modern, have made assertions which would seem to imply their belief that the Scripture was its own interpreter exclusively, but they probably expressed themselves inadvertently, in consequence of their not having that question distinctly before them. Thus, St. Cyril: "Scripture is sufficient, we need not any foreign teachers," and Tertullian, "our principle is that Scripture doth suffice."

* The word tradition appears to be used by Burnet, pages 95 and 117, as it is in our 34th article, as synonymous with custom or usage.

ciently interpret itself." Such remarks were probably excited by the error, so prevalent both in the Hebrew and Roman Church, of regarding tradition not merely as an interpreter but as of equal authority with the written word. In their zeal these pious men did not sufficiently separate the uses from the abuses of this doctrine of tradition, and overlooked the fact that for the elucidation of many texts of the Holy Scriptures even they themselves had been indebted to ancient authors, and to customs which had existed in the Church from the beginning.

We shall make but one other quotation from the Protest at the Diet of Spires in 1529: "Those passages of Scripture which seem obscure cannot be more properly explained than by other and clearer passages of the same Scripture, for the Protestants are assured that *this is the single method* by which certainty and freedom from doubt are clearly attainable, and that the traditions of men rest upon no solid foundation."

It is evident they are combatting the great error of Papacy, the divine authority of oral tradition, and in their zeal have inadvertently denied the utility of the various helps which the pious, and they themselves among the rest, have in all ages resorted to for the elucidation of the sacred text. Their position that Scripture is the single method of explaining Scripture is certainly untenable.

The practical inferences from our present inquiry are obvious and important.

As there are in the Bible some things hard to be understood, let us avail ourselves of *all the means* of interpretation in our power. Let us assist others to understand this holy book by imparting to them those means which we possess. But if from our pecuniary inability, the unwillingness to receive them of those whom we would benefit, or any circumstance whatever, these helps to religious knowledge cannot be communicated, let us not withhold the simple text, for there is a large portion of the Bible so "plain that he may run that readeth it,"* and there is another portion which parallel places will satisfactorily explain without recurrence to any extrinsic assistance.

Into the Bible Society Question there has been introduced, as we remarked, this third inquiry: "Is that a correct rule of interpretation, that *all* the dark places in Scripture can be explained by the clear ones?"

That there are *some* dark places which can be explained by clear ones, or that the same truth which is less clearly stated in one place is brought to light in another cannot be denied. We need only refer to various prophecies obscure when revealed, rendered perfectly clear by the record of their fulfilment; and to the fact that the same truth directly mentioned in one place is only incidentally introduced, or perhaps briefly alluded to in another. But the position that all dark places can be thus elucidated, though it is maintained by some persons, is undoubtedly untenable, for there are depths which can never be fathomed by the mortal understanding, which perhaps are unfathomable by any creature however exalted. There is another class of dark places which can be explained only by a reference to the history of ancient times, of which class we had occasion to speak under the head of the second inquiry. And there is a fourth class which are discoverable, as the great truths of science are, by the application of the mind thereto, with a right temper and with

* Hab. ii. 2.

persevering diligence and prayer. "Simple truths (says Bishop Jebb) are simply expressed, majestic truths are clothed in appropriate majesty of language, and mysterious truths are invested with that sacred veil which they alone may venture to penetrate, who are at once illuminated by christian grace, animated by christian love, and regulated by christian humility. Such spirits are invited and expected to search out the wonders of God's word, no less than the works of his creation. The English Church has secured to religious knowledge, the same assistance from antecedent investigation, which, in all other departments of science, is deemed indispensable to advancement. The continental Protestants, on the contrary, by sending the candidate for christian instruction, to the Bible alone, obliges every man to begin anew for himself; and to describe merely the same round, which thousands had trodden before him. This is no exaggerated statement. For, supposing it once established, that Holy Scripture is to be interpreted exclusively from itself, what, in the nature of things, is to follow, but that the inquirer of the nineteenth century is to begin and end, where the inquirer of the first century began and ended! And thus, were the world to remain for ten thousand years, the same course must lead, without deviation, to the same result: the last inquirer could hope for no deeper knowledge than the first, except so far as the greater mental strength or capacity of individuals, might make an accidental difference: and whilst every other branch of knowledge is most happily progressive, that knowledge, above all others the most transcendently important, must be doomed to a cheerless, hopeless, unaspiring state of permanent infancy." Page 365 of Bishop Jebb's appendix to his Sermons, 1816.

On this subject also some distinguished Theologians have written incalculably. St. Augustine remarks: "Dark places are to be explained by more plain places, for that is the surest way of declaring the Scriptures, to expound one Scripture by another." Now this is a rule which cannot be universally applied. If he had said "some dark places," &c. the rule would have been both just and useful. Bishop Hopkins says: "If the Scripture speak more darkly in one place, it speaks the same truth more clearly in another." We have shown that this remark is inapplicable to three classes of truths, those above comprehension, those discoverable only by diligent study, and those elucidated by history.

As there are dark places which cannot be explained by clear ones, it follows that Scripture does not contain the means of its own interpretation. The proving of this last position does not necessarily establish the former; for, though the Scripture were its own interpreter, it would not follow that all dark places could be explained since some are incomprehensible, but the proving of the former necessarily proves the latter position.

We may remark, as a practical inference, that as some difficulties in Scripture are removed by proper investigation, there is a double motive, our own and others welfare, for engaging in such investigations. Let it not be supposed that such a dependence of men on others is incredible. There exists such a dependence in other respects both of a temporal and spiritual nature. The Lord effects his beneficent purposes by the use of instruments, and why should he not by the instrument of human study as well as any other? Why should not the ignorant be assisted by the wise, the young by their seniors in acquiring religious knowledge, as they undoubtedly are in acquiring human knowledge and habits of virtue?

The fourth inquiry brought into connection with our subject is, whether "the Bible, *independent* of notes and comments and of the sacred ministry, is a valuable source of religious instruction and incitement, to men in general, supposing of course, a humble reliance on the influences of divine grace?"

This point could not be precisely ascertained in a christian country, because religious knowledge in such a country is derived from other sources than the simple text of the Bible. Neither has this point been brought to the test in a heathen country, for the heathen into whose hands the Bible has been placed has, it is believed invariably, been assisted in his endeavours to understand it by some living teacher, or by some tract, or by witnessing some of the christian ceremonies.

Still we apprehend the inquiry which we are now considering must be resolved in the affirmative. We cannot doubt that if the experiment were made, the Bible itself, independent of any accompaniment whatever, would be found a valuable source of religious instruction and incitement to men in general, who applied themselves to it with a devout temper and suitable diligence.

It is not intended to disparage the other means of religious knowledge, or to assert that he who has the Bible alone has the same opportunities of religious improvement, as he who with this blessed book has the other means of enlarging his information and exerting his affections, to which we have adverted as having been also mercifully provided by Divine Providence and Grace. But we must avoid the opposite extreme, and beware of seeming to admit, that because the Bible is not the only means, it is therefore no means of religious knowledge. It does not seem to us that great good would result from the reading of the simple text of Scripture, and though we think greater good would result from its being accompanied with the ministry and with notes and comments, yet the former position furnishes a sufficient vindication of the design of Bible Societies. It has been said that common minds either do not understand, or they misunderstand the Scriptures, and in proof of this are alleged the divisions among professors. But this argument is not fairly stated, for these divisions exist, although the readers of the Bible have the notes and comments and institutions which it is supposed would prevent them. These divisions prove the perverseness of men or their weakness, but they do not prove the disadvantage of reading the Scriptures any more than the various sects of philosophers prove that the writings of such masters as Newton and Locke have not been useful. Strictly speaking, the question we are now considering, not having been brought to the test of experience, remains unsettled. The Christian world are divided in opinion, the Catholics and some few Protestants maintaining the negative, while the great body of these last are advocates of the affirmative. In the first Homily the true doctrine on this subject is interestingly stated: "A man may profit with only hearing, but he may much more profit with both hearing and reading. This I have said, as touching the fear to read through ignorance of the person. And concerning the hardness of Scripture, he that is so weak that he is not able to brook strong meat, yet he may seek the sweet and tender milk, and defer the rest until he was stronger and come to more knowledge." * * *

* * * * * "The Scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and easy for every man to use, and to walk in; as also of high hills and mountains, which few men can climb unto. And whosoever giveth his mind

to Holy Scriptures, with diligent study and burning desire, it cannot be (saith St. Chrysostom) that he should be left without help. For either God Almighty will send him some godly doctor to teach him, as he did to instruct the Eunuch, or else, if we lack a learned man to instruct and teach us, yet God himself, from above, will give light unto our minds, and teach us those things which are necessary for us, and wherein we be ignorant." "Be some parts of Scripture ever so unintelligible (says Bishop Secker) we have this comfort, that they cannot make the clear ones unintelligible too."

But there is another view of this subject. Let it be conceded that the Bible, to be useful, must necessarily be accompanied with other instruction. Still the *basis* of the instruction must be provided. May not the duty of promoting christian knowledge be with propriety and utility *divided*? May there not be considerations in favour of that plan by which one Society engages to distribute the simple text of the Bible, and another to send forth the Missionaries and the Tracts for its elucidation? He who denies that men in general will derive any religious advantage from reading the Bible unless it be accompanied by the living teacher and commentaries, may not inconsistently, support both the Bible Society, which charges itself with the one object, and the Missionary and Tract Society, which undertakes the other objects. At the commencement of these Essays we expressed the opinion that *they* could not be favourable to Bible Societies who questioned the usefulness of the Bible in its simplest form, but farther reflection satisfies us that even such persons may be friendly to Bible Societies on the principle that such Societies contribute, in some degree, that they take the preliminary measure, the first step in the great work of spreading the knowledge of the Gospel. It is they only who believe that it is dangerous to trust the Bible in the hands of the common people who can reasonably oppose the endeavours instituted for its general distribution.

E. E.

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

NOTICE OF A WORK LATELY RECEIVED IN CHARLESTON,

Entitled "*Proofs of Inspiration, or the Grounds of Distinction between the New Testament and the Apocryphal Volume; by the REV. THOMAS RENELL.*"

THE design of the above publication is, in a popular compendium "to prove the *exclusive* inspiration of the Scriptures of the New Testament." The necessity of it is evident from the following facts: The Apocryphal New Testament has been printed in a style exactly resembling that of the inspired New Testament, and "now, for the first time, divided into chapters and verses that the ignorant might be deceived by the similarity of the arrangement, and might imagine that they form a continuation or supplement to the Sacred Volume." The title page falsely intimates that these Apocryphal pieces were attributed in the four first centuries to Our Lord and his Apostles and their companions. All the pieces are represented as authentic, whereas the fact is, the Epistles of Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp alone are so, and the remainder are either of doubtful authenticity or decidedly spurious. Again: There is a false intimation that the writings contained in the New Testament were *selected* from numerous Gospels and Epistles, by certain persons who

undertook to act in the case; whereas the fact is, (as our author satisfactorily proves,) there was never any such selection or such compilers, for "the books of the Sacred Volume were from the very day of their writing, so distinguished from all other pieces, as to make any selection or compilation wholly unnecessary."

The plan of the work before us is thus detailed by its logical and learned author: "We shall consider, first, the necessity of inspiration, and show how essential it is that our standard of Christian faith and morals should rest upon an authority superior to that of man. We shall, secondly, examine the *extent* of that inspiration, or in other words, we shall ascertain what it is we mean, when we say that the Scriptures are inspired. We shall, thirdly, inquire into the proofs of inspiration; and show by their application, that the books of the New Testament are inspired, and that the pieces in the Apocryphal volume are not inspired. We shall, lastly, show that in the New Testament we have *all the writings* that ever were inspired; that no selection nor compilation has ever taken place, that none have been rejected, nor any lost."

The necessity of inspiration is maintained, as it respects the *doctrinal* part of the Scripture, from its relation to truths beyond the discovery of human reason; for instance, who but God could know certainly the truths declared in the 1 Cor. xv. that this mortal shall put on immortality, and that even those who sleep not, shall yet be changed?

As it respects the *historical* parts of the New Testament, the necessity of inspiration is inferred from the liability to partiality, even where there is no reason to question the honesty of the narrator, and from the natural imperfection of the human memory. "Besides there are many facts detailed, which the Apostles could have known *only from inspiration*." "For instance, the agony of our Saviour in the garden, and the awful circumstances attending it, were witnessed by no human eye, and we do not find that they were subsequently related by Christ to his Disciples."

As to the *moral* parts of the New Testament, the necessity of inspiration results from the new precepts and new motives which it contains, (altogether undiscoverable by human reason,) and also from the penalty which God alone could affix to a breach of morality. "We want inspiration to bring duty home to our consciences so as to convert the precepts of morality into the commands of God; to make obedience not a matter of choice, but of necessity, and to teach us while we listen to tremble."

Our author unanswerably asks, "If we believe that the immediate influence of the Spirit of God was necessary to enable the Apostles by their *preaching* to spread the knowledge of the Gospel over the whole civilized world, can we suppose that it was less necessary when they sat down to frame an account which was to exist for ever as a rule of faith and a standard of doctrine?" "If they had need of the divine assistance in preaching the word, still more had they in *writing* it."

With respect to the extent of inspiration, our author objects to a partial inspiration, that it is nothing else but the liberty of questioning any doctrines or facts repugnant to our own preconceived notions. He shows that there is no criterion by which we could make the distinction between the inspired and the non-inspired passages, and that no such distinction is ever made by the writers themselves. He shows that the sacred writers were left in full possession and use of their own natural faculties, and that great advantages re-

sult from the circumstance as it strengthens the force of their own personal evidence, and furnishes the powerful argument arising from their unpremeditated concurrence.

The proofs of the inspiration of the New Testament, are drawn by our author first from the testimony of the Apostles themselves. He quotes Gal. i. 12; 1 Cor. ii. 12, 4 and 5; 2 Cor. x. 8, 9, 10, 11; 1 Cor. xiv. 37, and 2 Peter, iii. 15, as decisive on this point.

He furnishes an able comment on 1 Cor. vii. 6, and following verses, to which we would refer any person who may have been inclined, from the expressions therein, to question the plenary and constant inspiration of St. Paul. In verse 40, the expression "I think also," from the double meaning of the English word "think" has produced, says our author, a misconception. The word in the original signifies "I am of opinion" or "I profess," implying, therefore, a very high degree of confidence and self-persuasion. This language, therefore, so far from impeaching his inspiration, is even stronger than if it were only a simple affirmative of the fact.

But our author further maintains the *exclusive* inspiration of the Apostles. "They, and they only, had the high privilege of guiding the everlasting Church by their pen, because their pen alone was directed by the Spirit of God."

In reply to the objection arising from the fact that two of the Evangelists were not Apostles, our author says: "We admit the inspiration of St. Mark and St. Luke, not upon their own personal claims, but upon their immediate and acknowledged connection with the Apostles. We have the clearest evidence that St. Mark and St. Luke were severally the companions of St. Peter and St. Paul; that they committed their discourses to writing and afterwards submitted what they had written to the Apostolic inspection and approbation. To the truth of this fact there are some remarkable points of internal evidence; one will appear from comparing Luke xxii. 19. with 1 Cor. xi. 28. It is upon the credit then of St. Peter and St. Paul, that we receive the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke and the Acts into the Sacred Volume."

His proofs of the *exclusive* inspiration of the Apostles are derived from 2 Peter iii. 2. Jude 17. 2 Thes. ii. 2. iii. 17. and 2 Tim. i. 13.

To establish this point the direct testimony of the companions and successors of the Apostles is also adduced: "Most valuable is the evidence of those, who, from their personal knowledge of the Apostles can best inform us what respect they claimed and what they actually received. We do not find that in the first ages of the Church, prayers were ever addressed to them; we do not find that their intercession was ever desired; but we do find that their writings were considered as the language of inspiration and as the oracles of God. And we also find that a very decided line of distinction was drawn between themselves and their cotemporaries."

"It was certainly the interest of these cotemporaries (humanly speaking) to have placed themselves upon the same level with their masters. After the death of the Apostles nothing could have been easier than to have persuaded the Church that the mantle of inspiration had fallen upon their shoulders. Their testimony, therefore, is highly disinterested."

Testimonies to the same effect, viz. the *exclusive* inspiration of the Apostles, are quoted from later fathers in a continued series to the fourth century.

The Apocryphal Volume is shown by the author to contain three classes of writings, authentic, doubtful and spurious. With respect to the authentic

he shows that inspiration was neither claimed for them by their authors, or attributed to them by any of their contemporaries. Of these Apocryphal Books Jerome says, "the Church reads them for the edification of the common people, not as having any authority to determine articles of faith. It does not receive them as *Canonical* Scripture."

With respect to the doubtful, he shows that the two works, "the Shepherd of Hermes" and "the Epistle of Barnabas," were written, not by the Apostolic men of these names, but by Hermes the brother of Pius Bishop of Rome, and the latter by some unknown author, and moreover, that neither of these authors claim inspiration, neither was it attributed to them by any person in primitive times, if we except a single sentence of Origen in relation to the "Shepherd of Hermes," which sentence appears to have been written inadvertently, and is unsupported if not contradicted by other assertions of the same Origen. With respect to the remaining parts of the Apocryphal Volume, our author shows them to be forgeries and thereby to forfeit all claim to inspiration. The following remark of our author is entitled to much consideration: "Of the many Apocryphal Books which once existed, but a few only remain. This is a circumstance which, of itself, speaks very strongly against their authority. On the other hand, as we shall hereafter show, of the inspired writings not a book has ever been lost. Had the Christian world thought these Apocryphal works worthy of attention or respect, they would have been preserved with the same care and by the same means, with the sacred writings; they would have been multiplied by innumerable copyists, and translated into all possible languages."

The last chapter of the valuable work before us is eminently valuable, and I wish the limits of the Gospel Messenger permitted the publication of the whole of it. In it our author shows that the Canon or Catalogue of the Scriptures of the New Testament was framed not by the decision of any individual, nor by the authority of any Council, but by the general consent of the whole Christian Church, that this consent immediately followed the death of the Apostles—that no other Gospel or Epistle ever claimed an admission into the Sacred Volume, besides those which we at present possess—that two centuries before the Council of Laodicea the matter was settled without difficulty or dispute. Some little doubt might once have been entertained with respect to one or two books, which were soon after generally admitted; but none was ever expressed, with respect to any Apocryphal compositions, whether of those which are now in existence, or of those whose names only have descended to posterity."

On this part of the subject our author is at issue, not only with Unbelievers, but with the Papists, who equally assume it as if proved, that the books which form the New Testament were *selected* from various other works of a similar description by the rulers of the Church in the fourth century. Now, Mr. Renneel maintains that neither at the Council of Nice, nor at any other Council, nor by any public act whatever, was any such selection or compilation made. "At a Council (he remarks) held at Laodicea in the middle of the fourth century, it was decreed that no books should be read in the Church besides the *Canonical* Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. This decree however, is no act either of selection or compilation; on the contrary it supposes that the Canon or orthodox standard of Scripture had been already determined. The following are the words in which the decree was given. 'That private

psalms ought not to be recited in the Church, neither any uncanonical books, but only the canonical books of the Old and New Testament.' These very expressions certainly presume the previous existence of a Canon or Standard. The act of the Council was merely declaratory, and was intended only to recall the attention of the Christian Church to the long established Standard, and to forbid the recital of all such books as did not come within it. Such an act was especially necessary, as the introduction of uncanonical books was at this time very frequent, and if not checked by the highest authority, might ultimately lead to much confusion and disorder."

It is known also, that some Infidels and Papists have asserted that some of the inspired writings have been lost. "Against this supposition," says Mr. Rennel, "there is a mass of evidence, and not a single grain in its favor." He thinks such a loss impossible from the "anxious care with which the writings of the Apostles were immediately dispersed over the whole Christian world, and from the versions of them which were early made, as well as from the reasonable inference that the providence of God would protect the productions of his Holy Spirit."

He examines critically those passages which have been supposed to refer to lost books of Scripture, and shows satisfactorily that they do not warrant such a construction. Thus he shows the propriety of rendering, 1 Cor. v. 9, after this manner: "I have written to you, (*i. e.* a little above, see verse 2.) in *this Epistle*," instead of "in an Epistle," whence has been inferred the loss of an Epistle to the Corinthians, written prior to that which we call the first. From the text Coloss. iv. 16. our author reasonably infers, not that there ever had been an Epistle addressed to the Laodiceans, but that it was a custom for the Epistles to be transmitted from Church to Church, and that the Epistle here referred to was that to the Ephesians, which having been read at Laodicea, was to be sent from that place to Colosse.

It is hoped that enough has been quoted from the present work to satisfy every Christian of his great obligations to the author, and to encourage the Clergy in particular to seek an opportunity of reading its instructive pages.

P.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

THE Sermons of the late Bishop Dehon, of this Diocess, have not, I apprehend, been as extensively read as they deserve, particularly in the country, where, probably, they are but partially known. To excite the attention of your readers, generally, to these admirable discourses, I have made a few extracts which I consider as peculiarly beautiful, and which, I doubt not, will be read with great delight. If you think they will subserve the cause of religion, by inviting those who have not read them, to the Sermons themselves, I should feel gratified by seeing them adorning the pages of the Gospel Messenger.*

AMICUS.

EXTRACTS FROM BISHOP DEHON'S SERMONS.

Imagine yourselves living in that age and state of the world, in which human nature is found unenlightened by revelation. Fancy yourselves, for a

* NOTE.—These Sermons have been so much admired in England, that they have passed into a second edition; and the Rev. Mr. Berens, a very respectable writer, has published a selection from them, for the use of young persons in the higher and middle classes of society, with a memoir of the Bishop's life.

moment, encompassed with the darkness of heathenism, the paths of virtue and safety obscured; your Maker hidden from your view; your origin, your duty, your destination, unknown; the way to the tomb, your inevitable course, haunted with spectres of doubt and dismay; your spirits turning, on every side, for light and direction; but finding, on every side, darkness and uncertainty. In the midst of this gloom, suppose the heavens opened, and there descended to you a messenger, bringing to you a book, which informed you of your origin and destiny; which revealed to you the true God, and assured you of his love and favour; which made the path of every virtuous excellence, plain before you; and disclosed to you a title, an eternal title, to immortality. With what transports of delight would you receive the messenger! I see you, in imagination, falling prostrate at his feet. The book which he gives you, you would press to your lips; you would hold it to your bosom; you would drop on it the tears of excessive joy. As the messenger returned to the skies, you would follow him with benedictions, till he vanished from your view; and the precious volume, you would carry to your habitation, with care, and unspeakable exultance. Your wife, and your children, would be called to behold the gift. Your neighbours and friends would be shown the treasure. And were the wealth of the world offered you in exchange for it, you would again clasp it in your hands, and declare it above all price. But, my brethren, take away the Scriptures, and what is your condition, but the condition of unenlightened nature? Consider their inspiration of God, and their important contents, and what is their value less, than if they were brought to you immediately from the skies? And yet, how imperfectly are they appreciated! Who hath sufficiently regarded them? Of the worth of the sacred volume, no estimation would be too high. For the kindness and condescension of the Almighty in giving it to us, no measure of gratitude would be excessive. But, because we have always been in the enjoyment of it, and its light and comfort are familiar to our minds, we behold it, as we behold the sun in the heavens, unmindful of the majesty and benignity of its Author, and almost unconscious of the importance of its beams. Surely, if the views we have taken of the subject are remembered, this insensibility to the value of the best blessing of life, will be reproved by your consciences, and carefully corrected. When you think of the inspiration of the Scriptures, of their completeness, and of their end and uses, unless you are ungrateful to your Maker, and unjust to yourselves, you will be, like the Psalmist, as glad of God's word, as one that findeth great spoils.—*On the Scriptures*, I. pp. 31, 32.

Parents! how great is your felicity in having for your offspring the benefits of this sacred ordinance. [Baptism.] How consoling, as that babe slumbers by your side, to know that from the guilt of the nature in which it was born, it hath been washed in a fountain set open by God. How blissful as its little mind begins to expand, to reflect, that it shall endure and expand for ever, having a charter of immortality sealed with the seal of God, and being destined, if it forfeit not its inheritance, to flourish among nobler beings in regions of eternal day. How happy, when thinking of the temptations and sorrows, to which it must be exposed in this evil world, to be able to plead for it with the Father, the promise of his protecting Spirit; and to say, I have caused it to be entered in the School of the Redeemer, where, if I keep it there, and it be diligent, it shall find wisdom, and safety, and consolation. What a

fund of joy, then, with respect to the present condition of his offspring is this simple ordinance to the truly christian parent.

But there is lifted up to me a countenance overspread with gloom. It seems to say, I had a child. I brought it to be washed in the waters of baptism. It was just beginning to learn its duty and to lisp its love. But death came. He tore from my arms my struggling babe. I shall see my child no more! Afflicted mother! learn a new motive to rejoice in God your Saviour. Your child, in its baptism, had been washed from sin and adopted of God; and sooner shall heaven and earth pass away, than its little spirit shall fail. Its lot is happy. It has escaped the hazards of a probationary life, in which, though it had been washed, it might have become again defiled; perhaps, defiled beyond reclaiming, and thus, have forfeited its heavenly inheritance. A seraph now, it is the care of angels. Amidst the spirits of the just, it "follows the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth." Be patient. Be holy. Be innocent and humble, like your child. And you shall one day find it in a situation—Oh! how shall I express its bliss. It will greet you with smiles; reposing on the bosom of its God.—*On Baptism*, I. pp. 87, 88.

The deluded worshipper of the Sun, waits in the morning, prepared, we are told, with many ablutions, to prostrate himself before his God, and adore him at his rising. With how much more exalted joy; with how much happier worship, are we, Christians, assembled to-day, to hail at his dawn, that "Sun of Righteousness," which, through the tender mercy of God, is rising upon our disordered world, with everlasting "healing in his wings!" The sun of the visible world, rises but to set; this that we worship, shall never go down. That Sun, affects only material natures, and dispels, for a time, the darkness which was spread over temporal scenes; this, shines to give joy to the souls of men, and disperses, for ever, the darkness which covered eternal concerns. That, gilds only the surface of life; its beams reach not into the valley of the shadow of death; this, brightens the tomb; it brings that life and immortality to light, which cheers the secret chambers of the bosom. The material Sun is destined, one day, to have its fires extinguished for ever; but this, when earth and the skies shall have passed away, is ordained to endure, as the light of the celestial world, and to it, angels and men shall everlasting bow, as to the brightness of the Father's glory and image, or manifestation of his Person. How pregnant, then, with joy, is the day of the rising of this glorious luminary, upon our benighted world! It is the commencement, to us, of the years of the right hand of the Most High. Patriarchs saw it at a distance, with the eye of faith, and were glad. Prophets have celebrated its coming. "The morning stars have sung together" at its dawn; "and the sons of God, have shouted" in heaven "for joy." And we, if we are not lost in the dreadful slumbers of the spiritual night, we shall be abroad from the chambers of darkness, ~~or~~ contemplating, and adoring this glorious Regent of the spiritual day.—*Exordium on Christmas-Day*, I. pp. 255, 256.

Our joy in the Lord, is the joy which springs from the well-grounded hope of inheriting heaven and immortality. By the coming of the Redeemer, that dominion of death is destroyed, which kept the living in terror, and seemed to threaten to hold the dead in eternal bondage. Anxiously had nature looked into the tomb. With a heart overcharged with emotions, she endeavoured to

look beyond it. But all she could with certainty discover, was mouldering relics of what man had been. Amidst these she stood, listening in anxious awe, if, from unseen forms, any sound might be heard of departed beings still in existence. But there seemed none to answer, neither any that regarded. Hope whispered to her, listen more intensely, for that the spirits which had animated these relics, yet did live. Again, she paused; again, she called; again, she hearkened; but all was solemn stillness. She turned from the tomb, clinging to the consideration, that no voice had been heard unfavourable to her wishes. She looked back upon it, yet longing after immortality; but it was "a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and where the light was as darkness." But before the power of Immanuel, this kingdom fell. He "overcame the sharpness of death, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Through his most blessed gospel, we have the comfortable assurance from him who holds the keys of life and death, that when the waves of this troublesome world shall have subsided, we shall find a haven where there shall be no more storms, nor fears, nor death: and the tears shall be wiped from all faces.—*On Christmas-Day*, I. pp. 270, 271.

(To be continued.)

To the Editors of the Gospel Messenger.

ALTHOUGH your work is devoted to religious subjects, yet, it is probable, you will have no objection to insert, *occasionally*, articles merely literary. If I am right in this opinion, I should wish to see on your pages, the following Eulogy on the English Tongue. It is part of a very eloquent speech delivered by the Earl of Moira, at a public commencement, at the College of Fort William, Calcutta, June 20th, 1814; and is a very happy exemplification of the commendation it bestows.

F. F.

EULOGY ON THE ENGLISH TONGUE.

Among the languages of modern Europe, specious but subordinate pretensions have been advanced to cadence, terseness, or dexterous ambiguity of insinuation, while the sober majesty of the English tongue stood aloof and disdained a competition on the ground of such inferior particularities. I even think that we have erred with regard to Greek and Latin. Our sense of the inestimable benefit we have reaped from the treasures of taste and science, which they have handed down to us, have led us into an extravagance of reverence for them. They have high intrinsic merit without doubt, but it is a bigotted gratitude, and an unweighed admiration which seduces us to prostrate the character of the English tongue before their altars. Every language can furnish to genius casually a forcible expression; and a thousand turns of neatness and delicacy may be found in most of them; but I will confidently assert, that in that which should be the first object of all language, precision, the English tongue surpasses them all; while in richness of colouring and extent of power, it is exceeded by none, if equalled by any. What subject is there within the boundless range of imagination, which some British author has not clothed in British phrase, with a nicety of definition, an accuracy of portraiture, a brilliancy of tint, a delicacy of discrimination, and a force of impression, which must be sterling, because every other nation of Europe, as

well as our own, admits their perfection with enthusiasm? Are the fibres of the heart to be made to tremble with anxiety, to glow with animation, to thrill with horror, to startle with amaze, to shrink with awe, to throb with pity, or to vibrate in sympathy with the tone of pictured love: know ye not the mighty magicians of our country, whose potent spell has commanded and continues irresistibly to command those varied impulses? Was it a puny engine, a feeble art, that achieved such wondrous workings? What was the sorcery? Justly conceived collocation of words is the whole secret of this witchery, a charm within the reach of any one of you; and remember that there was a period, not remote, when all these recorded beauties of our language were a blank; were without form and void. The elements of those compositions, which now so uncontrollably delight and elevate our souls, existed; but they existed as dormant powers, inert capacities; they were the unconnected notes of the gamut; the untouched strings of the harp. The music was in the instrument; but the master's hand had not thrown itself across the chords to rouse them from their slumber, and bid them scatter ecstacies. Then do you make trial of their force; fear not that the combinations are exhausted. Possess yourselves of the necessary energies, and be assured you will find the language exuberant beyond the demand of your intensest thought. It has no assignable compass.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

THE WRITINGS OF ST. JOHN.

THE following extract from a Sermon, preached in London, January 30, 1825, by Dr. Mant, Bishop of Down and Connor, on a very important subject, is worthy of the readers attention, and will amply reward him for the time he bestows on its perusal. If this should be your opinion, I should be gratified by seeing it on the pages of the Gospel Messenger. Z.

If we consider the circumstances under which St. John wrote, we shall find them to be very important, and they will assist us greatly in arriving at his meaning. All traditions agree in informing us that John wrote after the other disciples. The dates most commonly assigned to his writings, place them within three or four years of the conclusion of the first century of the Christian Church. At that early period, corrupt opinions had begun to grow up in the Church of Christ, and to diffuse their baneful influence. These opinions related to the *Person* and to the *sufferings* of the Author of our faith. On this subject, the turbid stream of heresy took two distinct courses. The CERINTHIANS, so named from Cerinthus, denied the *Godhead* of Christ; the DOCETÆ, the followers of Julius Cassianus, denied the *manhood* of Christ. The former affirmed that JESUS was not truly the Son of God, begotten before all worlds; the latter declared that he was not truly man. The former by derogating from his dignity, proportionably abated from the dignity and value of his sufferings. The others annulled the notion of his sufferings altogether. Against these destructive errors, this disciple stood forth to vindicate the honor of his Master and Redeemer, his Lord and God. Observe the manner in which he asserts his faith—"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked

upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John i. 1—4. And in the 4th and 5th chapters, you will observe how powerfully he asserts the doctrine known in the Church by the name of the incarnation of the Son of God. Mark, too, how he shows, throughout his epistle, the propitiation made for the sins of the whole human race, by the sufferings and death of him who united in himself the two natures of man and God. Observe, again, how he asserts in his Gospel the *divinity*, the *humanity*, the *office* of Jesus Christ. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John i. 1—15. I shall make no further comment on the meaning of this passage, than simply to assert, that he who shall deny that these words, in their plain and unsophisticated meaning, conveyed, and were intended to convey, the doctrine of Christ’s divinity and humanity, may also deny that the sun enlightens the earth, or assert that the earth shines of itself.

Against the heresy of Cerinthus, who conceived that Christ was no more than a man, the son of Joseph and Mary, John wrote his gospel. We see the facts of the Christian religion confirmed by circumstances in history, which, though but little noticed in themselves, are yet important when viewed in their connexion. The Apostles do never propose the doctrine of Christ’s divinity as a new article of belief, as a matter but partially known to the church, or only now divulged; they bring it not forward with any solemnity of introduction, to prepare the minds of the people for its first reception: on the contrary, they insinuate this truth, rather than prove it; they speak of it as a thing quite familiar to the minds of those whom they address; they advert to it in a way of contingency; as a doctrine always known and believed in, and as only brought to view in this way, that it may have its full effect.

This remark may be demonstrated to be true, by comparing the writings of St. John with those of the other writers. This doctrine having been denied, this last of the Apostles set himself to defend it. He, therefore, notices it in a different way; not in the easy method of his predecessors, but dwelling upon it formally and circumstantially, so as to impress it on the minds of his readers for ever.

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

ON THE EPISCOPAL ESTABLISHMENT IN THE WEST INDIES.

THE following extract from the *Quarterly Review*, for October, 1825, will, I doubt not, be read with considerable interest by all your subscribers. It is on a subject of great and increasing importance, and will, I trust, ultimately, be better understood and appreciated than it is now—the religious instruction of slaves.

C. E.

With the most lively and unmixed satisfaction, we hail the formation of an ecclesiastical establishment in the West Indies upon the model of our Established Church, and we anticipate, with confidence, the salutary reformation which the Clergy and many excellent men who are co-operating with them, must produce upon the whole colonial population: In this, as in every step to be taken in this great matter, but most especially in this, zeal must be regulated by knowledge; and therefore, without entering into consideration of the merits of individuals, or of particular forms of Church government, questions always invidious where unnecessarily discussed, it seems to us that, at least for the particular purpose in hand, the Episcopal form was wisely chosen; a form which, more than any other, is qualified to give order, uniformity and moderation, together with full allowance and scope, to the exertions of the most ardent well-regulated zeal. We have the fullest confidence, founded on a variety of authentic evidence, that the good effects of this measure are becoming daily more apparent in every part of the West Indies, and we were prepared to exhibit the proofs of it in detail. But the recent arrival of the Lord Bishop of the Leeward Islands, and the mass of authentic information which his report will communicate, has induced us to change our purpose, and to postpone for a separate consideration the present religious state and prospects of these colonies. It has been surmised that his return has been unexpected, and is attributable to difficulties and disappointments which he has encountered from the resident proprietors of his diocese.

We have reason to know, and state with confidence, that nothing can be farther from the truth. During his absence from this country, his Lordship has visited every Island in his diocese, with the exception of Tortola and Tobago, to each of which, however, he dispatched a clergyman with inquiries of a specific nature. In every Island upon which he has landed, he has made himself acquainted with its religious means of instruction by personally inspecting every Church and every School; he has ascertained, so far as was possible by public and private intercourse and examination, its religious wants, as well as the means of supply which are to be found in itself, the disposition of the planters to permit or promote the education of their slaves; as well as their ability and readiness by the contribution of money, labour, or materials, to assist in the erection of additional churches and schools. By personal attention to schools instituted by himself in Barbados, he has had the best grounds for satisfying himself of the docility of the negro children, and also of their being capable of being rendered the channels of elementary religious instruction to adult negroes.

We mention these things summarily, for the purpose of adding weight to the feelings and opinions which we have reason to believe he entertains. So far from returning discouraged by unexpected impediments, he feels that,

great as are the real difficulties, and distant as must be the full harvest of his labours, the prospect before him is full of encouragement; in every class of people, speaking of course generally, and attributing what we say in various degrees, he has found that spirit of respect for his person, office, and object, that zeal, liberality, and concession to his desires, which justify the liveliest, if not impatient, hopes; and in no instance has he experienced that kind of prejudice or that degree of opposition, which should make him despair of success.

To extend religious improvement to their slaves is, at once, their interest and their duty. It is of the utmost consequence, and especially at the present conjuncture, that they should be satisfied of this fact. To disclaim indiscriminately against instruction and religion, or to draw any general conclusions against their happy influence, because, in particular instances, they have been misapplied or perverted, can eventually have no effect but that of deceiving themselves, and giving their adversaries an advantage over them. Those to whom sound knowledge, moral and religious, is imparted, have invariably been a blessing to all with whom they are connected; and from the nature of things it cannot prove otherwise with the slaves in the West Indies. As servants, it will render them diligent, faithful, and obedient; and, as members of society, it will encourage industry, temperance, the celebration of the rite, and the observance of the duties of marriage, of all which the colonists cannot but know the value, and to which nothing but Christianity will induce the slaves to submit. The principle of religion can neither lead to inactivity on the one hand, nor insubordination on the other; its great object is to teach as all to lead quiet and peaceable lives in this world; not forbidding us to be active in the improvement of our temporal condition, but restraining us to lawful means, and, above all, enforcing upon us the necessity of doing our duty in whatever state we find ourselves placed. Let us not, however, be deemed offensive, if we add, that a knowledge of its doctrines, and obedience to its precepts, are not less necessary to the master than the slave. It is upon an increasing attention to moral and religious duties among the former, that the most certain hopes of the spread of moral and religious instruction among the latter may be founded; and we rejoice to perceive that they are not likely to be founded in vain. There seems every reason to believe that the higher orders of society in the West Indies are fully participating in the same improvement which is taking place among the lower, and we trust they will neither be ashamed to acknowledge the necessity, nor disposed to question the utility of the change. Wherever true religion gains ground, it softens and harmonizes the mind, and never were all parties so much interested in its propagation as in the West Indies. The internal authority of conscience is superadded by it to that of outward obligation; and the slave thereby induced to render to his master all service and respect.

FROM THE PHILADELPHIA RECORDER.

SACRED MUSIC.

In the early ages of Christianity, Music is said, by some of the Fathers, to have drawn the Gentiles frequently into Church through mere curiosity; who

were so well pleased with its ceremonies, that they were baptised before their departure.*

St. Augustine, speaking of the psalms and hymns heard at his first entrance into Church after his conversion, says, "The voices flowed into my ears, truth was distilled into my heart, and the affection of piety overflowed in sweet tears of joy."

The editor of *Anecdotes of Music, Historical and Biographical*, in noticing the effect of Handel's Oratorical Music, asserts "That Sacred Music of so noble and appropriate a character, is capable of inspiring sentiments of the most exalted devotion, and of elevating the mind far above its natural pitch, in silent and awful admiration of the wonderful works of God!"

La Trobe quotes the following words of the venerable Bishop Atterbury, "The only pleasures (of Heaven,) revealed to us, consist in holy Music and holy love, which are to be the joint enjoyment of all pious souls, through endless ages."

The wonderful sensation caused by the soul touching manner, in which the celebrated *Miserere* is sang at the pope's chapel in Passion week, is almost too well known to mention: many a one, whose religious education has been far removed from all pomp of worship, have bowed in heart as well as knee, under its powerful effects.

At the first performance of Handel's Oratorio of the Messiah, at which the king and several of the nobility were present, when the Hallelujah Chorus came, the whole audience, with the court and nobility, simultaneously rose up under the awful grandeur of the music, and continued reverently standing till its conclusion. When this great work, (the Messiah,) was first heard in Dublin, a nobleman, much charmed with the music, sent to a clergyman to borrow the words, as they are taken verbatim, (or nearly so,) from Holy Scripture. The clergyman sent him a Bible; thus, for the first time in his life, his lordship looked into a Bible, he read, was convinced, and became a converted man.

It is incredible the vast sums that have been raised by the performance of the Messiah, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, nourish the aged and promote Christianity; some calculate one hundred thousand pounds sterling.

John Wesley has noticed, that he once found at church an uncommon blessing during the Voluntary on the organ.

Thomas Olivers, one of the most erudite of Mr. Wesley's local preachers during the latter part of the last century, in speaking of the early stage of his religious inclinations, describes his feelings during the performance of a Te Deum at the Cathedral (Bristol, England) as if he had done with earth, and was praising God before his throne.

Shenstone in his essays, proposes the following query, "Whether the fervour of religious praise; whether the elevation of religious joy, may not be raised and exalted by music of a florid and figurate nature?"

The same author, speaking on Church Music: "If such an elevation to the spirits be not meritorious, be not devotion, yet it is attended with good conse-

* The pious, the benevolent, though eccentric, Rev. Rowland Hill, who at his (the Surry) chapel, has a noble organ, a first rate organist, and most excellent choir of singers, who also employs composers of eminence to write Anthems, &c. for the use of Divine service, used to remark, "Those who come to hear the singing, hear also the preaching—we have them there!"

quences, as it leaves a good impression on the mind favourable to virtue and a religious life."

St. Augustine (the apostle of the Britons) brought with him numerous cho-
risters, and as he approached the air resounded with Anthems, the beautiful,
solemn and impressive effect of which had no small share on the minds of the
populace in inducing them to forsake idols to worship the true God.

A celebrated female vocalist, of great beauty, cultivated musical talent, and
also otherwise accomplished, who sang at the Oratorios (when they were dig-
nified performances*) at the great musical festivals in the provinces of Great
Britain, and at first rate concerts, of course actively employed in those pro-
fessional exertions, which demand fine intellect, as well as knowledge, and
fine taste, was snatched away in her prime, being the fourth child of uncom-
mon gifts her broken hearted parents followed to the grave. Her last illness
was one delirium, except that not long before her spirit fled, she started up in
her bed, and sang, with seemingly preternatural pathos, the sublime solo of
"I know that my Redeemer liveth."

So a young lady of this country, a member of a choir, who was called away
in her youth, and whose latter days were one continued aberration of mind,
is said to have chanted, at intervals, most sweetly, some of the hymns she
had been in the habit of singing at church.

A gentleman, who about mid age chose religion for his future lot, was once
asked if he never, in his youth, felt any serious impressions. "Never," re-
plied he, "except when I was listening to the delightful sounds of the organ
and voices at Westminster Abbey, or St. Paul's Cathedral."

A person once observed, that he never either took a part in, or listened to
that pathetic Anthem, "Hear my prayer," by Kent, that he did not feel the
words as a secret prayer in his heart.

The above naturally reminded us of the following lines of Milton in which
he has reference to Cathedral music.

"There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into extasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes."

This shows (remarks one of Milton's commentators) that Milton, however
mistaken in other respects, did not run into the enthusiastic madness of that
fanatic age against Church Music.—*Ed. G. M.*

TO THE EDITORS OF THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

JOWETT'S RESEARCHES IN THE HOLY LAND.

THE following extracts from a Review in the Christian Observer, of Jow-
ett's Christian researches in the Holy Land, in 1824, cannot but interest the
pious reader.

G.

* It is a matter of regret, that of late years, not only much music of a secular na-
ture, but also music entirely inappropriate, is mixed up with selections of sacred com-
positions in the Lent Oratorios in London.

After a visit to the Baths of Tiberias, Mr. Jowett thus writes:—“The composure which came over my feverish spirits at this hour was inexpressibly refreshing. I laid myself down upon the ground; and, resting my head upon a stone near me, drew a little coolness from the soil: while the simple train of reflections, which naturally sprang up from the scene around me, added much to my enjoyment. At a great distance to the north, was the mountainous horizon, on the summit of which stands Safet, glistening with its noble castle : it is not improbably supposed that our Saviour had this spot in his eye, and directed the attention of his disciples to it, when he said, ‘A city that is set on a hill, cannot be hid:’ for it is full in view from the Mount of the Beatitudes, as well as from this place; and indeed, seems to command all the country round to a great extent. Tracing, at a glance, the margin of this simple lake, on the opposite or eastern side, the eye rests on the inhospitable country of the Gadarenes—in hospitable to this day; for my guide, after long silence, perceiving my attention directed that way, begins a long tale about the dangers of that part, the untamed and savage character of the mountaineers, and the extreme hazard of attempts to visit them: few travellers, in fact, venture there: but, seeing that his account is not very congenial to my feelings at this moment, he has dropt his story. Close above my head, an Arab is come to spread upon the ruins his tattered clothes, which he has just washed in the lake, that they may dry in the sun: and, at a distance just perceivable, is another indolent peasant, sauntering by the water’s edge, and singing at intervals, a poor Arab song; which, though not ‘most musical,’ has nevertheless, the charm of being ‘most melancholy.’ But that which awakens the tenderest emotions on viewing such a scene as this, is the remembrance of one, who formerly so often passed this way; and never passed without leaving, by his words and actions, some memorial of his Divine wisdom and love. Here, or in this neighbourhood, most of his mighty works were done: and, in our daily religious services, we have read, with the most intense interest, those passages of the gospel which refer to these regions. However uncertain other traditional geographical notices may be, here no doubt interrupts our enjoyment, in tracing the Redeemer’s footsteps. This, and no other, is the Sea of Galilee—in its dimensions, as I should judge, resembling exactly the size of the Isle of Malta, about twenty miles in length, twelve in breadth, and sixty in circumference. Here Jesus called the sons of Zebedee, from mending their nets, to become ‘fishers of men.’ Here he preached to the multitudes crowding to the water’s edge, himself putting off a little from the shore in Simon Peter’s boat. But there is not a single boat now upon the lake, to remind us of its former use. Yonder, on the right, must have been the very spot, where, in the middle of their passage from this side towards Bethsaida and Capernaum, the disciples were affrighted at seeing Jesus walk upon the water—where he gently upbraided the sinking faith of Peter—where he said to the winds and waves, ‘Peace! be still;’ and the sweet serenity which now rests upon the surface is the very same stillness, which then succeeded. Here, finally, it was, that Jesus appeared, the third time after his resurrection, to his disciples, as is related by St. John; and put that question to the zealous, backslidden, but repentant Peter—‘Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?’—One question thrice repeated; plainly denoting what the Saviour requires of all who profess to be his: and followed up by the solemn charge, ‘Feed my lambs—Feed my sheep!’ While I gaze on the scene, and muse on the affecting records connected with it, faith in the

Gospel history seems almost realized to sight; and, though I cannot comprehend that ‘great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh;’ yet, believing it, all my feelings of wonder and adoration are called into a more intimate exercise.”

Mr. Jowett appears to have been much struck, in common with almost all other travellers, with the exceeding beauty of the position of the Holy City and the glories which yet remain of that once exalted City. The scenery around is unchanged. Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives are yet beheld by the traveller. No lapse of time has plucked up from their base the “everlasting hills.” “They may not be removed, but abide fast for ever,” and furnish to the traveller the vivid emblem of that security which Jerusalem had before she cast off *His* protection who had promised, “As the mountains stand round about Jerusalem,” even so to “compass round his people for ever.”

But the distant view of Jerusalem is all the glory which it now retains: and even in that view the “elegant proportions, the glittering crescent, and beautiful green-blue colour, of the Mosque of Omar,” which is its present prominent beauty, form the most forlorn features in the scene, as occupying, or rather usurping the place unoccupied by the “temple of the Great King;” and appearing, to use Mr. Jowett’s application of the prophetic figure, the “abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, where it ought not.”

Presently, it being three o’clock, our attention, says our author, was roused by the voice of the Mowedden from one of the Minarets, calling the Mahomedans to their usual prayers of that hour. The Bishop mournfully turned to me, and exclaimed, “how long?” His few and simple words quite sunk into my heart. I said it was truly painful to hear that voice in the Holy City; and that I viewed with sincere sympathy the present distresses which they suffer. “Our sins!” he slowly replied, “the measure of our punishment is not yet filled up!” I could only assent by the motion of my head.

THE SABBATH.

(Concluded from page 93.)

O SCOTLAND! much I love thy tranquil dales;
But most on Sabbath eve, when low the sun
Slants through the upland copse, 'tis my delight,
Wandering, and stopping oft, to hear the song
Of kindred praise arise from humble roofs;
Or when the simple service ends, to hear
The lifted latch, and mark the gray-hair'd man,
The father and the priest, walk forth alone
Into his garden-plat or little field,
To commune with his God in secret prayer,—
To bless the Lord, that in his downward years
His children are about him: sweet meantime,
The thrush that sings upon the aged thorn,
Brings to his view the days of youthful years,
When that same aged thorn was but a bush.
Nor is the contrast between youth and age
To him a painful thought; he joys to think
His journey near a close; heav'n is his home.
More happy for that man, tho' bowed down,
Tho' feeble in his gait, and dim his eye,
Than they, the favourites of youth and health,
Of riches and of fame, who have renounc'd

The glorious promise of the life to come,—
 Clinging to death.—Or mark that female face,
 The faded picture of its former self,—
 The garments coarse but clean,—frequent at church,
 I've noted such an one, feeble and pale,
 Yet standing, with a look of mild content,
 Till beckon'd by some kindly hand to sit.
 She had seen better days; there was a time
 Her hands could earn her bread,* and freely give
 To those who were in want; but now old age
 And lingering disease have made her helpless.
 Yet is she happy, aye, and she is wise,
 (Philosophers may sneer, and pedants frown,)
 Although her Bible be her only book;
 And she is rich, although her only wealth
 Be recollection of a well-spent life—
 Be expectation of the life to come.
 Examine here, explore the narrow path
 In which she walks; look not for virtuous deeds
 In history's arena, where the prize
 Of fame or power prompts to heroic acts.
 Peruse the *lives* themselves of men obscure;—
 There charity, that robs itself to give,
 There fortitude in sickness nurs'd by want,
 There courage that expects no tongue to praise,—
 There virtue lurks, like purest gold deep-hid,
 With no alloy of selfish motive mix'd.
 The poor man's boon, that stints him of his bread,
 Is priz'd more highly in the sight of Him
 Who sees the heart, than golden gifts from hands
 That scarce can know their countless treasures less:
 Yea, the deep sigh that heaves the poor man's breast
 To see distress, and feel his willing arm
 Palsied by penury, ascends to Heaven,
 While ponderous bequests of lands and goods,
 Ne'er rise above their earthly origin.

And should all bounty that is cloth'd with power
 Be deem'd unworthy?—Far be such a thought!
 Even when the rich bestow, there are sure tests

* The character here described is well portrayed in the following passage of *Newton's Letters*: "We have lost another of the people here; a person of much experience, eminent grace, wisdom and usefulness. She walked with God forty years. She was one of the Lord's poor; but her poverty was decent, sanctified, and honourable. She lived respected, and her death is considered as a public loss. It is a great loss to me: I shall miss her advice and example, by which I have been often edified and animated. Almost the last words she uttered were, 'The Lord is my portion, saith my soul.' "

I have known many instances of such persons. The character is indeed most highly respectable; but it does not obtain that respect and support which it so well merits. In truth, wealth is so devotedly worshipped, that virtuous poverty must of necessity be neglected, if not despised. Every man is aspiring to the *imaginary dignity* of the person who happens to be a little *richer* than himself. The distinction of wealth is gradually absorbing every other. I would prefer the aristocracy of pedigree to that of riches.

† "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Mark xii. 41—44.

Of genuine charity: yes, yes, let wealth
 Give other alms than silver or than gold,—
 Time, trouble, toil, attendance, watchfulness,
 Exposure to disease;—yes, let the rich
 Be often seen beneath the sick man's roof;
 Or cheering,* with inquiries from the heart,
 And hopes of health, the melancholy range
 Of couches in the public wards of woe:
 There let them often bless the sick man's bed,
 With kind assurances that all is well
 At home, that plenty smiles upon the board,—
 The while the hand that earn'd the frugal meal,
 Can hardly raise itself in sign of thanks.
 Above all duties, let the rich man search
 Into the cause he knoweth not, nor spurn
 The suppliant wretch as guilty of a crime.

Ye bless'd with *wealth!* (another name for *power*
 Of doing good,) O would ye but devote
 A little portion of each seventh day,
 To acts of *justice* to your fellow men!
 The house of mourning silently invites.
 Shun not the crowded alley; prompt descend
 Into the half-sunk cell, darksome and damp;
 Nor seem impatient to be gone: inquire,
 Console, instruct, encourage, soothe, assist;
 Read, pray, and sing a new song to the Lord;
 Make tears of joy down grief-worn furrows flow.

O Health! thou sun of life, without whose beam
 The fairest scenes of nature seem involv'd
 In darkness, shine upon my dreary path
 Once more; or, with thy faintest dawn, give hope
 That I may yet enjoy thy vital ray:
 Though transient be the hope, 'twill be most sweet,
 Like midnight music, stealing on the ear,
 Then gliding past, and dying slow away.
 Music! thou soothing power, thy charm is prov'd
 Most vividly when clouds o'ercast the soul,—
 So light displays its loveliest effect
 In low'ring skies, when through the murky rack
 A slanting sunbeam shoots, and instant limns
 Th' ethereal curve of seven harmonious dyes,
 Eliciting a splendour from the gloom:
 O Music! still vouchsafe to tranquilize
 This breast pertub'd; thy voice, tho' mournful, soothes;
 And mournful ay are thy most beauteous lays,
 Like fall of blossoms from the orchard boughs,—
 The autumn of the spring: Enchanting power!
 Who, by the airy spell, can't whirl the mind
 Far from the busy haunts of men to vales
 Where Tweed or Yarrow flows; or spurning time,
 Recal red Flodden field; or suddenly
 Transport, with alter'd strain, the deafen'd ear
 To Linden's plain!—But what the past'rall lay,
 The melting dirge, the battle's trumpet-peal,
 Compar'd to notes with sacred numbers link'd
 In union, solemn, grand! O then the spirit,

* In some hospitals, the patients are supposed to be treated with all due justice, if the *bolus* and the knife be liberally administered. Nothing is done to amuse or to console.

**Upborne on pinions of celestial sound,
Soars to the throne of God, and ravish'd hears
Ten thousand times ten thousand voices rise
In slow explosion,—voices that erewhile
Were feebly tun'd perhaps to low-breath'd hymns
Of solace in the chambers of the poor,
The Sabbath worship of the friendless sick.**

Blest be the female votaries, whose day
No Sabbath of their pious labours prove,
Whose lives are consecrated to the toil
Of minist'ring around th' uncurtain'd couch
Of pain and poverty: blest be the hands,
The lovely hands, (for beauty, youth, and grace,
Are oft conceal'd by Pity's closest veil,)
That mix the cup medicinal, that bind
The wounds which ruthless warfare and disease
Have to the loathsome lazarus-house consign'd.

Fierce Superstition of the mitred king!
Almost I could forget thy torch and stake,
When I this blessed sisterhood survey,—
Compassion's priestesses, disciples true
Of him whose touch was health, whose single word
Electrified with life the palsied arm,—
Of him who said, *Take up thy bed, and walk,*
Of him who cried to Lazarus, *Come forth.*

And he who cried to Lazarus, *Come forth,*
Will, when the Sabbath of the tomb is past,
Call forth the dead, and re-unite the dust
(Transform'd and purified) to angel souls.*
Extatic hope! belief! conviction firm!
How grateful 'tis to recollect the time
When hope arose to faith! Faintly at first
The heavenly voice is heard: then by degrees
Its music sounds perpetual in the heart.
Thus he, who all the gloomy winter long
Has dwelt in city-crowds, wand'ring a field
Betimes on Sabbath morn, ere yet the spring
Unfold the daisy's bud, delighted hears
The first lark's note, faint yet, and short the song,
Check'd by the chill ungenial northern breeze;
But, as the sun ascends, another springs,
And still another soars on loftier wing,
Till all o'erhead, the joyous choir unseen,
Pois'd welkin-high, harmonious fills the air,
As if it were a link 'twixn earth and heaven.

* Every one has experienced how much *contrast* enhances pleasure, and aggravates pain. Perhaps in created beings perfect happiness is impossible, without the contrast of recollected misery. This consideration affords an answer to those persons who censure the resurrection of the body as a provision unnecessary and unwise,—who say that the joys of a blessed spirit cannot be increased by a union with a material body, however excellent in form, structure, and powers. I would ask, what *other* provision could possibly furnish the pleasure derived from contrast, so vividly, so constantly? A celestial form, the habitation of that being who formerly dwelt in a body, frail, diseased, mortal!—To the man who had been blind in his earthly abode, what a change! his sightless orbs transformed into eyes of telescopic ken!—To the palsied! that body which could not move itself,—endowed perhaps with electric velocity! that once feeble, faltering voice—attuned to the harmonies of the heavenly choirs, “who sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints: Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!”

DR. FRANKLIN'S SENTIMENTS RESPECTING PUBLIC WORSHIP.

THE following interesting extract from a letter of Dr. Franklin to his daughter Mrs. Bache, dated Nov. 8, 1764, is from the London Monthly Magazine and Review for August, 1825:

"Go constantly to Church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the Common Prayer Book, is your principal business there, and if properly attended to, will do more towards amending the heart, than sermons generally can do. For they were composed by men of much greater piety and wisdom, than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be; and therefore I wish that you would never miss the prayer days: yet I do not mean that you should despise sermons, even of the preachers you dislike, for the discourse is often much better than the man, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth. I am the more particular on this head, as you seemed to express, a little before I came away, some inclination to leave our Church, which I would not have you do."

A FEW ITEMS FOR THE USE OF ALL CONCERNED.

WHEN I see nothing of religion in the life of an individual, but at the communion table, I can hardly avoid believing that he has none at all.

When I see one within the pale of the Church, who can converse; and that even fluently on any other subject, but is dumb on the subject of religion, I query whether he thinks or knows experimentally any thing at all about it; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

When I see a professed Christian nodding in the house of God, while the ambassadors of Christ are delivering the messages of heaven, I think, what a fearful situation from which to be awakened by the call of death, to answer for his treatment of the message, and the contempt shown to the Being who sends it.

When I see a professed follower of Christ, after a most solemn and affecting appeal to the heart and conscience from a faithful minister, while passing out of the house of God, gaily saluting an acquaintance with an air of levity on the countenance, and perhaps making arrangements for a party the coming week, I cannot but feel that he has but little sense of eternal things, that his Christian graces are dormant, or that he is yet a child of wrath even as others.

When I hear one making excuses for those who needlessly travel or otherwise profane the Lord's day, and will indulge himself in worldly or vain conversation on those sacred hours, I suspect that either the fourth commandment is omitted in his Bible, or that he does not believe God means as he has said.

When I hear one professedly of the family of Christ, traducing the character or good name of a brother or sister, especially in the presence of those who are of the world, I conclude his closet and his Saviour are both forsaken, and that he is making work for bitter repentance, besides deeply wounding the cause of Christ.

When I hear of one who calls himself after Christ's name, grumbling because he has to pay a few dollars for the support of the gospel ministry, I conclude he had better remove and dwell among the heathen, to save himself this enormous waste, and thus find a *cheaper way* to heaven for himself and family.

When I hear a professor of religion talking against the benevolent enterprises of the present day, and refusing to grant his aid for the spread of the gospel, I conclude he must be extremely ignorant, or a faithful servant of the prince of darkness.—*Connecticut Observer.*

Miscellaneous Intelligence.

WHEN the late excellent Bishop Middleton, of Calcutta, was about to leave England for his diocese, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, granted him a vote of credit for £1000, to promote the objects of the society in India; and at a special meeting, Bishop Law, by appointment, addressed him as follows.

The readers of the *Gospel Messenger* will be highly gratified by the style, the spirit, and the sentiments both of the address and the not less admirable reply:

"My Lord Bishop of Calcutta,

"Though I am sensible that many members of this society would discharge the office I have undertaken with much greater weight and effect, yet still, on every other account, most sincerely do I rejoice that it has fallen to my lot to offer to your lordship this address, from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

"In the first place, we hail the appointment of a Bishop in India as a fortunate omen to the cause of religion. The establishment of episcopacy there will, as we have reason to think, most effectually check every erroneous doctrine, stop the wild progress of enthusiasm, and spread the knowledge of uncorrupted Christianity over a country of great extent, and of an immense population. That it is you who have been singled out for this new and important station, is an additional cause of great and general satisfaction. 'When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth.'

"This same event cannot also but be a source of the purest pleasure to a mind like yours. A wide field is opened to your talents and zeal. To you is committed the apostolical charge of diffusing the light of the Gospel, where its rays have scarcely penetrated; and of becoming, in the hand of Providence, as we hope and pray, the blessed means of establishing multitudes in the faith.

"But this our joy, both on a public and private account, is mixed, as most other gratifications are, with feelings of a different and opposite nature. We lose the friend—the zealous and able advocate of our civil and ecclesiastical establishments,—the warm supporter of this excellent institution. It cannot therefore be a subject of surprise or blame, if, on the present occasion at least, our feelings of this kind too much predominate.

"The circumstances of this day may perhaps sometimes recur to your mind, when on the trackless deep, or in a distant clime. But, whenever they do recur, be assured that you are bearing with you the esteem, the gratitude, and the affection of every member of this society. As to myself, it will ever be the source of pleasing recollection, that I have mingled my regrets with theirs, and that I have offered to you what I never offer but at the shrine of virtue, the tribute of my respect and regard.

"But I have too long detained you from the immediate business of this meeting. Let me then now, in the name of this very venerable society, present to you their

"VALEDICTORY ADDRESS."

"The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, desire, with sentiments of profound respect, to offer to your lordship their sincere congratulations on your elevation to the episcopal see of Calcutta.

"The intercourse of a religious character which has long subsisted between this society and the British dominions in the East Indies, had given us abundant reason to recognize the indispensable necessity of the establishment of an episcopal government there, in order to secure, in any competent measure, the due celebration of the ordinances of divine worship, and the advantages of Christian instruction to the European inhabitants: and not less frequent occasions have arisen to satisfy us, that without this important additional instrument, the endeavours must be, in a great degree, hazardous and ineffectual to propagate a pure and reformed faith among the Pagan and Mahomedan nations of that vast empire. It is with unfeigned satisfaction therefore that we saw, in the recent act for the renewal of the charter of the honourable East-India Company, a provision made towards the attainment of this unspeakable blessing, in the power given to his majesty to erect and constitute a bishoprick, with such jurisdiction and functions as should, from time to time, be limited by his majesty, by letters patent under the great seal of the united kingdom.

"The great benefits which this society has derived from your lordship's counsels and co-operation in all its undertakings, and not the least in that department which relates especially to the religious concerns of the eastern parts of the world, require of us to declare, that the measure of our utmost hopes in this matter was amply fulfilled, when we saw you called, under the special providence of Almighty God, by the command of his royal highness the Prince Regent, to this high and arduous office.

"From this moment, therefore, the society looks with fresh hopes towards the East, and feels itself under a pressing obligation to persevere in, and augment to the utmost of its power, those efforts in which it has been long engaged, in behalf of the maintenance there, and the farther advancement of the kingdom of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

"And, if we may be permitted on this interesting occasion briefly to advert to the nature of those efforts, we would beg leave to remind your lordship—

"—*That* more than one hundred years have elapsed since the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge first began to labour in this vineyard.

"—*That*, in the progress of this interval of time, through the aid of our missionaries, the consolations and instructions of the gospel have been extended to many of our countrymen placed (otherwise) in circumstances of peculiar spiritual privation and danger; and that many thousands of natives have been converted from idols to the living God.

“—*That*, even from the earliest date of our connection with the East, we have made it a special object of our concern to afford to the natives an opportunity of hearing and reading the word of God in their vernacular tongues.

“—*That* the liturgy of the church of England has likewise been translated and printed by our missionaries, and is used by them in public worship.

“—*That* many other religious books and tracts, in the English and other European languages, and in sundry of the native dialects of Hindostan, have been, from time to time, sent over by this society, or have been translated and printed there under its patronage, to the incalculable spiritual advantage of multitudes of our fellow creatures.

“And, finally,—*That*, under the persuasion of the essential importance of engraving the best principles in the young and tender mind, this society *have ever* been anxious to promote and encourage the erection of schools for the instruction of the children, as well of Europeans as natives.

“These, in few words, have ever been, and still are the objects in which this society is especially desirous to be made an instrument, in the hands of divine Providence, for the maintenance and propagation of the Christian religion in the British dominions in the East Indies; and these, we have the consolation to know, will be among the choicest objects of your lordship’s solicitude and care in your weighty charge.

“We entreat, therefore, will all deference and respect, that you will condescend to honour, with such portion of your countenance, protection, and superintendence, as they may seem to deserve, those exertions which henceforward, by the blessing of divine Providence, this society may be enabled to make, in prosecution of the above designs.

“And we beg further respectfully to invite your favourable attention to certain printed documents, in conformity to which diocesan committees, in connection with this society, have been recently established, under the special recommendation and patronage of the right reverend prelates of England and Wales, in almost all parts of this kingdom, and from which the most beneficial consequences have been found to ensue. A great eastern institution to be erected upon this model, and embracing, in friendly combination, the several grand objects already referred to, has long been a matter of the earnest and anxious wishes of this society; and to the uttermost would all our desires be gratified, if the establishment of such an institution might be coeval with the auspicious moment of your lordship’s arrival there, and be permitted to grow up under the shelter of your fostering wing.

“That the Almighty may bless you with a prosperous voyage, and crown with ample success your lordship’s efforts for the advancement of his kingdom and glory, is the earnest prayer of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.”

To this address Bishop Middleton made the following reply:—

“*My Lord Bishop of Chester,*

“I cannot proceed to notice the interesting and important matter contained in the valedictory address with which I have been honoured, without having first offered to your lordship my sincere acknowledgments for the singular kind expressions with which your lordship has been pleased to introduce it. I shall indeed, my lord, to adopt your lordship’s affecting language, whether ‘on the trackless deep, or in a distant clime,’ recollect ‘the circumstan-

ces of this day; and most refreshing will it be to my wearied spirits in moments of difficulty and discouragement, for which I must not be unprepared, to be permitted to believe, on the authority of your lordship, that I bear with me the favourable opinion and friendly regards of the members of this venerable society. My pretensions to this high distinction, the kindness of your lordship's nature has exceedingly overrated; but my sense of its value I cannot exaggerate, or even adequately express. In the approbation of this society is conveyed to my feelings whatever could be due to the best directed efforts, and most signal services, in the cause of religion, of order, and of peace: it is the testimony of those who are distinguished by knowledge, by rank, by piety, and by Christian zeal in the greatest of Christian nations, and in the proudest period of her existence.

"Impressed with these sentiments of the venerable society, and persuaded of the vast importance of the objects to which its labours have been unceasingly directed, I need not hesitate to offer it the pledge of my assurance, that in the distant empire, the spiritual concerns of which the Almighty has committed to my superintendence, I shall feel it to be my duty, so far as my ability may extend, to countenance and to promote the objects of the society, especially those to which my attention has been called in its address. In common with the society, I have ever been of opinion, that if the difficulties of diffusing the light of the gospel through the eastern world can be successfully encountered, (and the sure word of God forbids us to despair) it can be only by establishing among our countrymen in Asia, the form of church government derived from the apostles, by inculcating attention to divine ordinances, by unity of doctrine in the teachers of religion, and by a departure from iniquity among all who name the name of Christ. That the society has, for more than a century, unremittingly endeavoured to instil into the minds both of the natives and of our countrymen in India, sentiments favourable to the diffusion of the gospel, is admitted by all who are acquainted with its proceedings, and whose candour is open to the truth. Much of the Christianity which subsists in those regions, has been planted under its auspices and nurtured by its care: and the exemplary conduct of those holy men whom it has sent forth to bear the glad tidings of the gospel of peace, their temperate zeal, their conciliating manners, their patience in well doing, and their devotion to the cause of Christ, have supported the credit of the missionary name, and have contributed to refute the misrepresentations of ignorant or interested men.

"I am not unacquainted with the printed documents to which the address refers me, in conformity to which, diocesan committees, under the sanction of the right reverend prelates of England and Wales, have been established in most parts of this kingdom; and I pray for their multiplication, as the most effectual means of extending the blessed influence of the society at home. Happy indeed shall I deem myself, if Providence should enable me, by any exertion of diligence and zeal, to establish an eastern institution, framed upon the same admirable model, and co-operating with the society in its benevolent designs. But whatever be the result of this and of my other endeavours, I would only entreat, that the society will be assured of my earnest desire to promote the objects which it has this day recommended to me; and not to impute to indifference or inattention any failure or delay, for which the acknowledged difficulties of my situation may afford a reasonable excuse. Unsignedly could I wish, that so arduous an undertaking had been committed

to stronger power; but my trust is in the Almighty, who can call forth strength out of weakness: already am I deeply impressed with the awful responsibility of my charge: and in the execution of my duties shall feel that, under the divine protection, I possess some security against the mischiefs of an erroneous judgment, in my firm attachment to the doctrines and discipline of the church of England.

"I now take leave of the venerable society, with my warmest thanks for this and every other mark of its regard, desiring to be remembered in its prayers."

BISHOP CHASE'S VISIT TO A TRIBE OF OHIO INDIANS.

IN the (London) Missionary Register for December, we find a letter from Dr. Chase, Bishop of Ohio, to his friend Timothy Wiggin, Esq. giving an account of a visit he had made to some Indians settled on the Sandusky River. The letter was written in October, from Worthington, Ohio. We select from it the following passages:—*Christian Journal.*

A most interesting scene took place in my visitation of the Oneida and Mohawk Indians on the Sandusky river. They are the remnant or rather a branch of those once famous tribes, which, in moving back from their former residence, accepted of an invitation from the Senecas to settle on the lands reserved by congress for the Senecas about the Sandusky river in this Diocese. I had heard of them as being attached to the church of England; but could never go and see them till this summer. I found them in their peaceful retreat, engaged in the duties of husbandry; raising corn and cultivating their gardens.

My friend and guide, who conducted me through the devious paths in the wilderness, in the rain for nearly a whole day's journey, introduced me to this most interesting people. Decent and dignified in their manners, they received me with great respect; and when I told them that I came among them to do them good and not harm, to pray with them and preach the Gospel to them in the name of Jesus Christ our common Saviour, they fully comprehended my meaning, and gave me a hearty welcome.

To show the medium of our mutual good understanding, they produced their Common Prayer-book, being that which was translated into the Indian language, with very little alteration, from the English Liturgy, together with the Gospel of St. Mark, A. D. 1787: and printed in London. What news was this to me! "And have you read this?" said I. "Constantly, every Sunday, in morning and evening prayer, with the poor scattered members of our tribe, providentially sojourning on this river," said they by their interpreter. I inquired then if they understood and felt the great importance of the truths which they uttered with their mouths. They replied, that they hoped they did; but that many of their people were inclined to run astray into the wickedness of the tribes that surrounded them, notwithstanding all that the old men could do. "Poor, blessed people!" thought I, while suppressing my tears: "God give me grace, to be found worthy of serving you."

During the remainder of the evening, intelligence was spread throughout the woods, that on the morrow, divine service would be performed, and a sermon preached at eight o'clock; while, wearied with the exercise of the day,

I reposed myself on the hard bed of an Indian cabin, and slept sweetly till morning.

The appointed hour came; and though it rained most abundantly, a large number both of male and female natives assembled. How interesting the sight of so many decent worshippers, and how great the comfort of joining with them in those prayers and praises which had been the vehicle of the piety of all whom I held dear through thirty years of Christian ministration in holy things, I leave you to conceive.

By proceeding with all the prayers, as the Church has directed, the whole congregation, through an aged reader, could join in repeating and offering up the same petitions and praises with myself—they, in the Indian language; and I, in English. And when we sang the metre Psalms and Hymns, their version being in the same measure with the English, I could join with them in this also; with voices uncommonly sweet and full, they sang tunes with which I was well acquainted; and never did I witness more order, yet plainer indications of true devotion. Though many of them could speak a little English, yet the sermon was interpreted to them in their own language. They have used Lay Baptism, they say out of necessity; yet would be much rejoiced, if they could have an authorised ministry.

My mind was most favourably impressed towards these poor people; and my attachment to our primitive Liturgy mightily strengthened, by this instance of its great utility. Without such a help, how much of the Missionary's labour is lost; like oil spilt upon the ground, without a vessel to contain and perpetuate it. Had it not been for the Prayer Book, the worship of God would, to all human view, never have been perpetuated to the salvation of these now interesting people.

The Prayer Book and Homily Society have recently distributed in foreign ships in English ports, the first Homily in Modern Greek, several of the Homilies translated into the German, French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish languages; also, the Prayer Book, or selections from it, in all the same languages.

The Morning and Evening Services of our Liturgy have also been published both in the Malay and the Chinese languages. In the latter language, Dr. Morrison has made a translation of the second Homily, which is considered peculiarly appropriate for distribution among the Chinese. The Society were making arrangements to print the whole of the Book of Common Prayer in the language of the Island of Ceylon, said to contain at least 40,000 inhabitants.

The Religious Tract Society of Great Britain state in a circular, that they have since 1808 printed tracts in forty-two different languages.

Apology for the Bible.—A neat and cheap edition of Bishop Watson's "Apology for the Bible," has recently been printed in this city, by Mr. A. E. Miller, more with a view to its usefulness than to any other consideration. The learned author of the *Pursuits of Literature*, says:

"To write such a book as this, (the important, convincing, and eloquent letters addressed to Thomas Paine,) is to do a real service to mankind. A cheap edition of it is printed, and it is hoped will be circulated throughout the kingdom. I would also particularly recommend the perusal of the sixth letter of the series of letters which the Bishop addressed to Mr. Gibbon. To

young men of fashion and of abilities, originally good, but obscured by libertine life and conversation, it will be peculiarly serviceable; as well as to those who are led astray by some modern pretended discoveries in natural philosophy, now a favourite mode of introducing and enforcing scepticism and infidelity. I think also that his ‘*Defence of Revealed Religion*,’ in two short sermons, is of great merit, and of general utility. Bishop Watson should often write, but with the utmost caution, accuracy, and consideration, because his works will always be read.”

General Theological Seminary.—We have been requested by the Librarian, to publish the following list of Books presented to this Institution; and to state it to be the intention of the Library Committee, in future, publicly to acknowledge all donations made to the Library.

Acknowledgment.—The Librarian of the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, acknowledges the receipt of the following donations to the library since the commencement of the present session, (Nov. 10, 1825:)

- From the Rev. Charles Burroughs, Portsmouth, New-Hampshire: *Grotii Opera Theologica*, 4 tom. fol.; *Grotii Epistolæ*, 1 tom. fol.
- From John Redman Coxe, M. D. Philadelphia: *Ninety Latin and German Theological Dissertations*, 4to.
- From the Rev. Thomas Hartwell Horne, M. A. London, through Bishop Hobart *Glassii Philologia Sacra*, 4to: *Clapham's Selection of Sermons*, 3 vols. 8vo.: *Oberthur Historia Hierarchiæ in Ecclesia Christiana*, 2 tom. 8vo.; *Pareau Institutio Interpretis Veteris Testamenti*, 8vo.; *Cook's Inquiry into the Books of the New Testament*, 8vo.; *Horne on the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, 8vo.
- From Mr. Edward W. Peet: *Heerbrordi Melema Philosophica*, 4to.
- From the Rev. Hugh James Rose, M. A. Vicar of Horsham, Sussex, England: *Rose's Account of the State of Protestantism in Germany*, 8vo.
- From Richard Whittingham: *Anecdotes of the Life of Bishop Watson*, 8vo.; *Travis' Letters to Gibbon*, 8vo.; *Riesbeck's Travels in Germany*, 3 vols. 8vo.; *Sermons by Henry Usher*, D. D. 8vo.; *Marsh's Lectures on Divinity*, part 5; *Ticknor's Remarks on Changes in Harvard University*.

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CALENDAR FOR MAY, 1826.

- 1. St. Philip and St. ~~Jeaned.~~
- 4. Ascension Day.
- 7. Sunday after Ascension.
- 14. Whitsunday.
- 15. Monday in Whitsun Week.
- 16. Tuesday in Whitsun Week.
- 17. {
- 19. } Ember Days.
- 20. {
- 21. Trinity-Sunday.
- 28. First Sunday after Trinity.